

## REMARKS

The abstract of the invention was objected to due to informalities. A new abstract is attached hereto. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1, 7, 10, 11 and 17 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Yamaguchi in view of Kuriki. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that Yamaguchi discloses the claimed invention, except for a conversion buffer memory for storing data packets for discarding a data packet at an end of a time interval Tx when a number of the data packets in the conversion buffer memory not falling below a threshold value  $t > 0$  during the time interval Tx. However, the Examiner cites Kuriki as disclosing this feature. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Kuriki discloses a packet fluctuation absorbing method and apparatus, in which packets from a preceding node of a network are received. The packets are temporarily retained in a buffer, and respective packets are read from the buffer in the order of receipt of the packets at given time instants. The read packets are output to a following node of the network so as to absorb time-related fluctuations of the packets. When the number of retained packets in the buffer is less than the stored lower limit (predetermined and larger than zero) as a result of the outputting of one of the read packets, and a use count of the corresponding one of the read packets is equal to or larger than a predetermined use count upper limit, the corresponding packet in the retained packets of the buffer is discarded (abstract and Figs. 8 and 9; see also paragraph [0048]). Significantly, packets are only discarded based on various thresholds (e.g. lower and upper limits), and when there are an excess of packets.

In the instant invention, on the other hand, packets are discarded at the end of a time interval if a number of the data packets stored in buffer memory does not fall below a threshold value during the time interval. That is, there are two requirements that must be met in the claimed invention, namely the end of a time interval and falling below a threshold, before the packet is discarded. In this respect, the buffer memory is continuously monitored along with the time interval. Significantly, the controlling or discarding of packets reduces the transmission delay during conversion by at least one time interval using this technique.

Claims 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 16, 18 and 19 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Yamaguchi in view of Kuriki, further in view of various combinations of

Huang, Ogawa, Kato and Wang. The rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the same reasons presented in the arguments above, and since neither Huang, Ogawa, Kato nor Wang disclose the recited features.

Claims 4, 5, 14 and 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include any base and intervening claims.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. An indication of the same is solicited. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 02-1818 for any fees which are due and owing, referencing Attorney Docket No. 118744-120.

Respectfully submitted,

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### Abstract

The invention relates to a data conversion method whereby a packet-based data transfer is converted into a data transfer which is synchronized in time slots, and packets are stored in a conversion buffer memory. According to the invention, a packet is rejected at the end of a time interval if, during the time interval  $T_x$ , the number of data packets never falls below a threshold value  $\tau > 0$  in the conversion buffer memory. The invention also relates to a data conversion system.